Press Release

Arm Pit test to determine heat strokes and dehydration

New Delhi, May 06, 2017: With the temperature rising, cases of heat cramp, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are expected. This trend will continue in coming months with the rise in heat index, though the overall temperature of the environment may be low but the humidity will be high.

It is the heat index, which decides occurrence of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. With high humidity, the heat index may be much higher in the presence of relatively low environmental temperature.

Speaking about the same Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA said, “One should differentiate between heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. In heat stroke, the internal temperature may be very high and may not respond to injectable or oral paracetamol. In such cases, the temperature of the body needs to be lowered over minutes and not hours. Clinically, both heat exhaustion and heat stoke may have fever, dehydration and similar symptoms.”

The main difference will be abnormal “arm pit test”. Normally, axillae will always be wet even if a person has severe dehydration. If the axillae are dry and the person has high fever, this invariably means that the person has progressed from heat exhaustion to heat stroke. Such a situation should be treated as a medical emergency.

A few ways to stay safe this summer include:

- Wear lose and comfortable clothing preferably made of easy to breathe fabrics
- Drink plenty of drinking water
- Do not exercise in the heat. Rather do so early morning or late evening when the sun level is lower
- Eat a healthy and light diet. Stay away from fried and high trans-fat and salty food items.
- Use sunscreen, sunglasses and wear a hat

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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